

MAY 20 1950

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP75-00149R000200380003-9
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Douglas: Our Defense Is Strong

James H. Douglas, the nation's deputy defense secretary, said here Friday that America's defense now is strong enough to deter war, despite the current "threatening attitude" of the Russians following the Paris attempts at a summit conference.

At a press conference prior to an Armed Forces Day speech, Douglas declined to talk about American spy flights over Russian soil, saying the Kremlin needs time to "cool off" so further attempts can be made to talk of peace.

He said Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev had made up his mind to "torpedo" the summit conference even before it started by using the spy plane incident as a propaganda device.

Douglas spoke at a combined luncheon meeting of the Greater Des Moines Chamber of Commerce and the Iowa Manufacturers Association at Hotel Savery.

Two Lessons

At his press conference, the secretary said two lessons came out of the ill-fated summit conference.

"We learned," he said, "that the negotiations for a long-term peace will be extremely difficult, and that throughout the cold war we must maintain strong military forces."

He pointed out that prior to the attempted summit conference, "we had a tendency to become complacent about our military defense."



JAMES H. DOUGLAS
"We're not running second"

Douglas said the nation's defenses are not rigid, but are constantly being revised. He said recent revisions call for more money to be spent on the missile program and on early warning systems designed to detect enemy missiles heading toward the United States.

U-2

The secretary was tight-lipped on the U-2 flight over Russian territory.

He said: "The U-2 (spy plane) is under the control of our Central Intelligence Agency. We are anxious to let the subject cool off so we can once again take up negotiations in areas that are promising for world peace."

"This is a good time to stay away from sensitive subjects," he said.

In his speech, Douglas said the Soviet premier "exploited the U-2 incident" to prevent negotiations on the basic causes of world tension.

Nuclear Testing

He said the United States attached great urgency to a "rational agreement" on nuclear weapons testing. He said such an agreement would result in some risk for the United States.

"For defensive posture and, indeed, the military base of a strategy aimed at deterring war rests to a large extent on the nuclear technologies," he explained.

"If there is to be a treaty halting all further tests subject to defection, or all tests during an agreed period, it stands to reason that this technology will decline."

"Not Second"

Douglas said we are not "running in second place" to Russia.

While admitting that the Russians may have more long-range missiles than we will have in the next two or three years, Douglas said he could see "no period in which they could expect to attack without bringing destruction upon themselves."

He said any long-range missile gap should "narrow and disappear" after 1962.

The speech by Douglas opened the Armed Forces Day celebration in Des Moines. A parade, including 3,000 active and reserve members of the armed services, 100 pieces of military equipment and six bands will highlight activities Saturday.

The parade down Walnut street will begin at 10 a. m. at E. Ninth street and end at Twelfth street.

Open houses also are scheduled at military installations at Fort Des Moines Saturday afternoon.